

PRESS RELEASE

Congressman John Conyers, Jr.

Fourteenth District, Michigan
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary
Dean, Congressional Black Caucus

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Conyers Alarmed at Efforts to Obstruct Ohio Recount Effort, Calls Witness to Monday Hearing to Detail Such Efforts

“Yesterday, it came to the attention of the House Judiciary Committee Democratic Staff that efforts to audit poll records in Greene County, Ohio are being obstructed by County Election officials and/or Ohio Secretary of State Ken Blackwell. According to Joan Quinn and Eve Robertson, two election observers researching voting records, Greene County officials initially gave Quinn and Robertson access to poll records, and then abruptly withdrew such access. Greene County Director of Elections Carole Garman claimed that she had withdrawn access to the voting records at the direction of Secretary Blackwell. Regardless of who ordered the denial of this access, such an action appears to violate Ohio law. Later, at the same office, election observers found the office unlocked, and what appeared to be locked ballot boxes, unattended. Prior to the withdrawal of access to the books, observers had found discrepancies in election records, and possible evidence of minority vote suppression.

House Judiciary Committee Democrats wrote a letter to Blackwell on December 2 requesting answers to 34 questions about election irregularities and fraud in Ohio. This letter included questions about major discrepancies in Perry County poll books. Since that letter, additional documentation has been provided to the Democratic staff demonstrating similar problems in other counties.

Because of the urgency of the Greene County matter, Congressman John Conyers, Jr., Ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee, has requested that Ms. Quinn testify at a hearing scheduled Monday in Columbus, Ohio. Ms. Quinn has agreed to do so and will also present sworn statements from corroborating witnesses. Conyers issued the following statement:

"The Recount effort is simply a search for the truth of what happened during the 2004 Presidential election in Ohio. We have now repeatedly seen election officials obstruct and stonewall this search for the truth. I am beginning to wonder what it is they are trying to hide."

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